

**Amendments to the Claims:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

**Listing of Claims:**

Claims 1 – 8 (Canceled).

9. (Currently Amended) An inflator for an airbag comprising:

an elongated pipe containing an inert gas, wherein the elongated pipe comprises a circumferential surface and two opposite ends;

a pair of igniters, wherein the igniters are positioned at the opposite ends of the ~~tube~~ pipe;

wherein the elongated pipe ~~tube~~ contains a plurality of spaced apart openings at three or more ~~a plurality of~~ different distances from one of the ends of the pipe along the circumferential surface of the pipe, wherein the openings are sealed until the inert gas reaches a predetermined pressure.

10. (Original) The inflator of claim 9, wherein the inert gas is prepressurized.

11. (Original) The inflator of claim 9, wherein each of the openings is covered by a rupturable seal.

12. (Original) The inflator of claim 9, further comprising a gas inlet for charging the inert gas into the pipe.

13. (Original) The inflator of claim 12, wherein the gas inlet is sealed.

14. (Original) The inflator of claim 13, wherein the gas inlet is sealed by ball welding.

15. (Original) The inflator of claim 9, wherein the pipe is curved.

16. (Original) The inflator of claim 9, further comprising a pair of caps, wherein each cap covers each of the igniters.

17. (Original) The inflator of claim 16, wherein each cap contains booster propellant.

18. (Original) The inflator of claim 16, wherein the ends of the pipe are sealed by caulking material.

19. (Original) The inflator of claim 17, wherein the ends of the pipe are sealed by caulking material.

20. (Currently Amended) A device for protecting an occupant of a vehicle comprising:

an airbag positioned to inflate along an interior side of a vehicle;

a pipe comprising a circumferential surface, two ends, and a sealed opening at each end, wherein the pipe extends in a longitudinal direction of the vehicle along an upper part of the airbag and is configured to conform to the shape of the upper part of the airbag, wherein the pipe is filled with pressurized gas, wherein the length of the pipe substantially corresponds to the length of the airbag in the longitudinal direction of the vehicle;

a plurality of gas outflow openings in the pipe positioned on the circumferential surface of the pipe to allow the pressurized gas to enter and inflate the airbag, wherein the gas outflow openings are sealed until the pressurized gas reaches a predetermined pressure;

a pair of inflation devices connected to the ~~the~~ pipe, wherein each inflation device includes an initiator and a booster propellant for producing an exhaust gas for further pressurizing the pressurized gas, wherein each inflation device is positioned in one of the sealed openings located at the ends of the pipe so that the initiator can receive a triggering signal from a control device when the occurrence of a vehicle collision is detected by a sensor.

Claim 21 (Canceled).

22. (Previously Presented) The device of claim 20, wherein the plurality of gas outflow openings is located at a plurality of different distances from one of the ends of the pipe along the circumferential surface of the pipe.

23. (New) An inflator for an airbag comprising:

an elongated pipe containing an inert gas, wherein the elongated pipe comprises a circumferential surface and two opposite ends;

a pair of igniters, wherein the igniters are positioned at the opposite ends of the pipe;

wherein the elongated pipe contains a plurality of spaced apart openings at a plurality of different distances from one of the ends of the pipe along the circumferential surface of the pipe, wherein the openings are sealed until the inert gas reaches a predetermined pressure, and wherein the openings are partial punctures in the elongated pipe which form weakened portions.